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Correctly fitting points clips

This information has been prepared to reinforce the correct method for fitting points clips and locks on the Network.

Clipping and locking a set of points with points clips is a commonly used safety measure.

Points must be clipped and locked for the passage of rail traffic if:

- it cannot be assured that facing points will remain in the correct position,
- there is an instruction at the set of points to clip and lock them, and
- the set of points are an included instruction in the controlling signal box.

Points may also be clipped and locked as part of the protection arrangements for Work on Track, to:

- reduce the number entry points to a TWA, or
- protect the limits of a LPA or TOA.

In order for clipping and locking points to be an effective safety measure, points clips must be fitted correctly as described in *NPR 707 Clipping points*.

Recent Safeworking investigations and worksite protection audits have found an alarming number of points clips incorrectly fitted.

Before fitting points clips

Qualified Workers tasked to fit points clips must make sure:

- the work can be done safely,
- authority to clip the points has been given,
- the Signaller has given assurance the points will not be operated
- points to be clipped are in the required position,
- switch blade is tightly against the stock rail, and
- that the points clip to be used is the correct type for the set of points to be clipped.



FIGURE 1: Example of a standard points clip

Fitting points clips

When fitting a points clip to a set of points, Qualified Workers must:

- fit the points clip at the correct position for that set of points,
- make sure the points clip is fitted as close as possible to the tapered end of the switch blade,
- make sure the points clip is fitted to the underside of the rail and between the sleepers,
- lock the points clip using an SL lock or if authorised, an XL lock, and

Checking points clips have been fitted correctly

To make sure the set of points have been effectively clipped and locked. Qualified Workers should check that the:

- barrel nut of the points clip is outside the four-foot,
- points clip is secured tightly and cannot be moved by hand,
- set of points are properly closed,
- route is correct before allowing rail traffic to travel.



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